

6 - The Self-Destruction of Trashmouth Tozier by DeTrashmouth

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Summary: Part 6; It's been twenty seven years since the Losers' swore to come back to Derry... Richie remembers that now. But can he go through with his promise?

6 - The Self-Destruction of Trashmouth Tozier

(With excerpts from 'IT' by Stephen King)

One year. It had been one year since his little dance with death, and he finally felt like his life was back on track. That's when his phone rang to knock him on his ass all over again.

The call had come completely unexpected. The impact of it hit Rich 'Records' Tozier, Trashmouth as he used to be called back when, like a goddamn truck. Although he hadn't thought of that place, and those losers, and.. IT, in almost three decades, the truth was that Richie had been subconsciously dreading this call for most of his life.

"How much do you remember, Rich?" The man identifying himself as Mike Hanlon, the Homeschool kid from Derry, asked him over the phone. The voice was completely unfamiliar to him, and yet, something about it was very familiar all at the same time. Richie had been mere moments away from doing his time on stage, and now he was suddenly feeling very nervous, almost on the verge of being physically sick. A way he hadn't felt since his first days on stage. But this was something else, a sort of anxiety like he hadn't known since... since...

"Very little," Rich said, and then paused. "Enough, I suppose..."

"Will you come?" Mike asked. "I'll come," Rich said, and hung up.

Not even moments later he was pushing himself away from his manager, Steve Covall, and hurrying out the back door where he hung over the ledge of the balcony, clutching his phone in his hand so tightly it could have snapped under the pressure, and proceeded to vomit like he hadn't since he was just a kid.

"What the fuck?!" Steve had gasped as he opened the door and saw his client retching, hyperventilating. It was bizarre to say the least. "You were fine just like five seconds ago! Who was it? Who called, huh?" Steve demanded.

Richie just stood there trying to catch his breath, trying to push this

feeling of ... Fear, as deep down as that shit it could go.

"Rich? Rich, talk to me," Steve said, reaching into his fancy suit pocket and pulling out a rather expensive silk handkerchief, handing it over to his client. "You're on in two minutes, you good? Cause... You're lookin'... Not good."

Rich overly ignored him, wiping vomit what was left on his chin off and tossing the handkerchief back at his little weasel of a manager.

"I'm fine," Richie said. He was far from it. In fact, this could have been the worst he felt in his entire fucking life.

"Fine? Good. Okay," Steve pulled Richie back into the building and led him to the stage. "Can we get the man a bottle of water?" He called out to a stagehand.

"Bourbon," Richie corrected him. "And some mints."

The alcohol was served to him on the rocks, he hated it that way, but he downed it anyway.

Fuck it.

"I don't think I can do this," Richie said lowly.

"Yes you can. Yes, you can, goddammit, because this is what you get paid to do. You like your life, Rich?"

"Eh..."

"That's what I thought. Well, you live such a luxurious life due to your ability to get your fuckin' ass out on that stage and make with funny ha-ha's. So? Go do it already, your crowd is waiting for ya!"

"How do I look?" Richie asked. Did Steve have it in him to say he looked like shit?

"Like shit," yes, yes he did. "You're shaking."

Richie looked down at the glass, empty of liquor but full of ice cubes that were rattling about now.

"Shit..." Suffice it to say, Rich Records Tozier bombed that night. At least this time he had a reason for it. In truth he had been bombing for the last month, his media accounts were riddled with people demanding refunds for his piss poor performances.

But as his catchphrase went...

"Thank you, Fuck youuuuu, and until next time!"

Mic drop. Tozier, out.

Later that night, Richie found himself sitting in the study of his home. Leaning back in the leather chair behind his desk, looking out at the Pacific Ocean. The clock on the desk — an expensive LED quartz that had been a gift from the talent agency — said that it was 8:09 P.M. on May 28th, 2016. It would, of course, be three hours later where Mike had called from. Derry, Maine. The place he left in '91 and swore never to return again. He felt a prickle of gooseflesh at that and he began to move, to do things.

First, of course, he had to put on a record. Grabbing blindly among the thousands racked on the shelves. Rock and roll was almost as much a part of his life as the comedy and his voices, and it was hard for him to do anything without music playing. The louder the better. The record he grabbed turned out to be a '78 retrospective, an 'oldies' by today's standards. A catchy little tune from The Cars.

Let the good times roll...

Let them knock you around

Let the good times roll...

Let them make you a clown

Let them leave you up in the air

Let them brush your rock and roll hair

Let the good times roll ...

"Not bad," Rich said. He even smiled a little. And at some point during the next hour it occurred to him that as immature and feeble-headed as he could be, he had been allowed to make all of his own final business dispositions in his life... Not to mention, his own

funeral arrangements.

For awhile there, it was Sandy who had been in charge of keeping his life nice and tidy. Sandy Wirt, whom he had met through Steve all those years ago. Their story could be long and sad or a Blondie and Dagwood comic-strip version, but Richie always settled for something in the middle when he thought of her. Had it been love at first sight? Maybe. She was the one who convinced him to ditch the specs and switch to contacts, and then gradually began to try and change everything else about him, too. Nonetheless, shortly after they began something between lust and what he thought was love, they'd decided to legalize the relationship. And with all marriages, the talk of kids arose shortly thereafter. It was mutually decided that it'd be Irresponsible to bring kids into such a shitty, dangerous, overpopulated world - and 'blah-blah-blah, babble-babble-babble.'

They had been young and reasonably idealistic. So, Richie went out and made a deposit in the men's room of the Bank of America, and got his wires cut. The operation went with no problem and there were no adverse aftereffects. And then it was back to the ol' crash-pad to party down and talk about the difference between Maoism and Trotskyism. *'Let the good times roll,'* as the song he was listening to went. But nothing good was ever meant to last, not with Richie Tozier.

Sandy had gotten an offer to join a corporate law-firm in Washington around the same time Richie was beginning to get recognition. No more opening acts, he was going to be the headliner from then on. Though, as Richie would find out, she had gotten the position by putting herself in another... Sandy had been cheating on Rich for who honestly knew how long. She had said that this was her big chance and Richie had to be the most insensitive male chauvinist oinker in the United States to be dragging his feet, and furthermore she'd had it with California anyway. He told her this was also his big chance, the career movie he'd been working so desperately for ever since Steve maybe mistakenly decided to hire him as a client. They thrashed it out, and trashed each other, and at the end of all the thrashing and trashing, Sandy Wirt-Tozier went her own way, and Rich 'Records' went his.

After About a year of short-lived relationships, mostly one-night-

stands with fans who just wanted bragging rights of saying they experienced a less than satisfactory few awkward minutes with 'that comedian,' Richie had woken up with this hobbyhorse about getting the vasectomy reversed. No real reason for it, and he knew from the stuff he'd read that the chances were pretty spotty, but nonetheless he thought, what the hell?

'The good news,' the doc had told him, 'is the operation won't be necessary. The bad news is that anybody you've been to bed with over the last two or three years could hit you with a paternity suit.'

'Are you saying what I think you're saying?' Rich had asked

'I'm telling you that you aren't shooting blanks and haven't been for quite awhile now,' he said. 'Your days of going gaily in bareback with no questions asked have come to an end, Richard. '

Rich thanked him and then called Sandy in Washington. As it turned out, she was already married again. Didn't take her long at all to find someone else, someone better. Expecting, as well, with whoever the hell this 'better' man was. Rich didn't care to ask, and in truth, he didn't want to know.

"When did you change your mind about the immorality of bringing children into such a shitty world?" Rich had heard himself ask her without even really thinking about it.

"When I finally met a man who wasn't a shit," she answered. "I guess I just got a little too old for Rock'n'roll." And with that, the phone clicked. Richie was left listening to the lonely chime of an empty dial-tone. And that was the last he ever heard of Sandy Whatever-the-hell-her-name-was-by-then.

...Bitch, you're never to old to rock'n'roll.

God, that relationship had gotten so completely fucked up, and the others who had come in and out of his life for short barely month-long stints that one might call 'relationships' afterwards had not panned out any better, either. In the end, Richie was alone. He was always alone, and more than that, he knew he was always going to be alone. Call it fate, call it destiny, or maybe just call him a narcissistic asshole who loved himself too much to ever truly love

anybody else. Once upon a time, maybe. These days, all he really felt for himself was an undying amount of disgust and self-loathe.

And now he was expected to just drop everything and go home, to face the friends, the only friends he may have ever truly had. And together, face the very definition of fucking evil. Did he have it in him to honestly do that again? Possibly, maybe, but not definitely. There was one last thing he had to do first. To consider it one 'last' thing sounded so final to him. And hell, maybe it was.

He plucked his cell off the desk with hands that hadn't stopped shaking since earlier that day and dialed his agent, hoping the conversation would go pleasant. Richie doubted it, however.

"Rich," Steve said into the phone with the hint of a sigh.

"Steve," Richie said back, sounding much more enthused.

"How's your mother?"

"Senile."

"Good to know you're taking after her then, ayuh?" Rich laughed. Steve ignored him. He stopped after a moment, 'ayuh?' That was a trait of the people back in Maine, where the hell did that come from?

"See the new issue of News Weekly?" Steve said after a moment.

"Not if I can help it," Rich said. "Anything career-ending worthy?"

"Just a whole article about how my favorite client is managing to fuck that up all on his own."

"As always," Richie shrugged. "But, speaking of your favorite client..."

"Cut the bullshit, Rich. What do you want?"

"A party favor," Richie said. "I'm celebrating tonight."

"Should I be worried?" Steve asked rhetorically, not sounding particularly caring.

"You'd be crazy not to be," Richie snickered.

"How big of a party are we talking?"

"Ten-G's worth."

"Jesus, Rich... That's a helluva lot of blow... I thought you were sober?"

"Yes, well... Desperate times,... old chum." the voice of Adam West said, pausing ever so slightly on his words to give off just the right amount of a Shattner-vibe.

"What, You going to Hefner's again? I thought they kicked you out after your last little hurrah."

"Not tonight. Party o' one here at Mi Casa de Trashmouth, señor..." Pancho Vanilla said with that shit-eating grin of his, twirling his finger around his imaginary mustache.

"Be serious, Rich," Steve said.

"Not even with my life depended on it. See you in twenty. Remember, I'm your favorite client!" and with that, Rich hung up the phone and remained silently seated in the darkness his study, listening to his music.

Though in truth, the sound of his own rapidly beating heart was what he truly listened to now. Eventually he got up and went over to his vault, and proceeded to count out ten grand, that was stuffed into a small bag he had trouble zipping closed. He proceeded to pour himself a drink, not on the rocks this time.

"Here's to living... and to dying, and to all those little bullshit moments in between," Rich told himself, and downed it in one large gulp that nearly caused him to choke.

About half an hour had passed before the doorbell finally rang, and Rich felt hollow with each step he took as he approached the door.

'Every breath you take, every move you make, I'll be watching you...'

Oh, the 80's.

Opening it at last, he saw his manager standing there with a disgraced expression on his face. Rich didn't so much care for that, his attention wandered to the black leather suitcase held in Steve's left hand.

"Thank God for small favors," Richie said, snatching the leather case from Steve.

"Yeah. Well, this favor isn't so small, and I'm not so sure it's God you should be thanking." Richie ignored him and just nodded to the other bag he had left out the dining room table.

Steve followed him inside and took the little bag, but didn't open it, and wouldn't bother counting what was inside. Whether it was the full amount or just a big ol' Fuck You napkin note with 'I-O-U' written on it, Steve wouldn't had been surprised either way. Instead, he reached into his jacket pocket and retrieved a rolled up magazine.

News Weekly.

He tossed it onto the table and Richie glanced at it, uninterested. It was just another horrible photo of him awkwardly smiling and sweating on stage, with a big red headline slapped over it that read 'Rich Records Bombs!'

"Hm, they must be hard-up for material," Richie said nonchalantly and turned his attention back to the leather case. "And tonight's forecast, weeee're lookin' at one HELLUVA blizzard up at the ol' Tozier place," a Newscaster's voice roared from his mouth.

"And if I may be so dubious as to ask," Steve began.

"Ask, you may, hrm, yes..." Richie said in his best Yoda voice.

"..What's the occasion?"

Richie looked up from the case, not at Steve, his eyes just sort of scanned the room for a moment as he licked his finger tip, dabbed it into one of the bags from the case and gave it a lick, rubbing the rest of it on his upper teeth. He never understood the appeal to that, but

it just seemed like the right thing to do when you dance this tango.

"Stuff."

"What kind of stuff?"

"Things and stuff," Richie fired back.

"Things and stuff that are worth you ruining a year of sobriety?"

"Goddamn with all these fucking questions, man," Richie sighed to himself. "You might be sorry you asked," he told Steve.

"Try me."

"I have to go away for awhile... It might be a long while, I don't know yet." He finally put the suitcase down and turned to his manager with a look that said, no, he was not joking. "I need a couple of days, at least."

"You're not serious, are you?" Steve finally asked. He sounded plaintive. "You've got gigs in Reno coming up, Rich. I mean, unless your mother just died or you've got to have a brain tumor or something ... Is your mother sick? Did she God-forbid die?"

"Yeah, died ten years ago."

"Have you got a brain tumor?"

"Not even a rectal polyp," Rich said before scrunching his face and going for a reach, "Actually, now that I think about it..."

"This is not funny, Rich."

"Yeah, and for the first time in a long time, my whole life maybe, I'm not laughing."

"You're being a cryptic asshole is what you're doing, and I don't like it."

"I don't like it either, but I have to go."

"Where? Why? What..."

"That just leaves 'Who' and 'When,' right?"

"Goddamn it! Talk to me, Rich!"

"You remember when I got a call earlier and threw up?" Rich asked. Steve nodded. "It was someone I used to know a long time ago. In another place, in another time. Back when something happened.. I made a promise. We all promised, that we would go back if the something started happening again. And I guess it has."

"What something are we talking about, Rich?"

"I'd just as soon not say.. Also, as crazy as it is to admit the truth... I don't remember."

"When did you make this infamous promise?" Steve scoffed.

"A lifetime ago. In the summer of '89 if memory serves, and I wish it didn't."

There was another long pause, and he knew Steve Covall was trying to decide if Rich 'Records' Tozier, aka Buford Kissdrivel, aka Wyatt the Homicidal Bag-Boy, etc. was having him on, or was having some kind of mental breakdown.

"You would have been just a kid," Steve said flatly.

"Thirteen or so," Richie considered. "Math was never my strong suit."

Another long pause. Rich waited patiently.

"All right..." Steve said at last. "I'll shift the rotation — I can call Chuck to pull a few shifts, I guess, if I can find what motel he's currently holed up in. I'll do it because we go back a long way together. But I'm never going to forget you kicked out on me, Rich."

"Oh, bite my bag, you annoying little imp," Rich snapped, feeling a headache coming on that was progressively getting worse. He knew what he was doing; did Steve really think he didn't? "I'm just asking for a few days off, is all. You're acting like I took a shit on the stage, when all I did was vomit behind the curtain."

"Yeah. A few days off. But, for what? The reunion of your Cub Scout pack in Shithouse Falls, North Dakota, or Pussyhump City, West Virginia?"

"Actually, I think Shithouse Falls in Arkansas, bo," Buford Kissdrivel said in his big hollow-barrel voice, but Steve could not to be diverted.

"Because you made a promise when you were a kid? Kids don't make serious promises for Christ's sake Rich, and you know it! Keep in mind that this is not an insurance company; this is not a law office. This is show-business, be it ever so humble, and you fucking well know it. You are putting my balls to the wall, so don't you insult my intelligence!" Steve was nearly screaming now, and Rich closed his eyes.

"Inside voices, please," Richie said sarcastically.

"I'm never going to forget this," Steve said, and Rich supposed he never would. But Steve had also said kids didn't make serious promises, and that wasn't true at all. Rich couldn't even remember what the promise had been — wasn't sure he wanted to remember — but it had been plenty serious.

"Steve, I have to go, I wish I didn't, fucking believe me. But—"

"Yeah, yeah," Steve waved him off impatiently. "And I told you I would handle it. So go ahead. Enjoy your trip to memory lane, if you have enough blow to take you the whole way."

Steve turned around and began heading out of the house, leaving Richie there with nothing but the small black leather case, and the copy of News Weekly that he graciously had been planted upon the cover.

"What, no hug?" Rich called out to him, but didn't get a response. Instead, he only heard the door slam. "Well then, '*Thank you, fuck youuuuuu, and until next time!*'"

Richie smirked, quoting himself and his stupid fucking catch phrase. He was surprised how often he could use that off stage, as well as on.

'Cause I'm a picker

*I'm a grinner
I'm a lover
And I'm a sinner
Playin' my music in the sun*

*I'm a joker
I'm a smoker
I'm a mid-night toker
I get my lovin' on the run...*

Richie clung to the leather case and snatched up the News Weekly, as he made his way through his large home. He was sometimes surprised by the thought that he was almost — not quite, but almost, a rich man. All courtesy of going on stage and making people laugh with stupid jokes, most of them just stories he had experienced in his life with a fictional and comedic twist on them to make the crowd chant. And the voices, of course. Those always sold the stories.

House, stocks, insurance policy, even a copy of his last will and testament. The strings that bind you tight to the map of your life, he thought. There was a sudden wild impulse to whip out his Zippo and light it all up, the whole whore's combine of wherefores and know-ye-all-men-by-these-present's and the-bearer-of-this-certificate-is-entitled's. And he could do it, too. The papers in his safe had suddenly ceased to signify anything.

The first real terror struck him then, and there was nothing at all supernatural about it. It was only a realization of how easy it was to trash your life. That was what was so scary. Just dragged the fan up to everything you had spent the years raking together and turned the motherfucker on. Easy. Burn it up or blow it away, then just take a powder. Behind the papers, which were only currency's second cousins, was the real stuff. The cash; four thousand dollars in tens, twenties, fifties and hundreds. Taking it now, he wondered if he hadn't somehow known what he was doing when he put the money in here — fifty bucks one month, a hundred and twenty the next, maybe only ten the month after that. Rathole money. Taking-a-powder money.

'Man, that's a fucking horrorshow,' he said in a whisper, barely aware he had spoken at all.

It all was slowly coming back to him now. What a pitiful bunch of losers

they were, with their little clubhouse in what had been known then as the Barrens. Remembering Stanley Uris. 'Stanley Urine,' the big kids called him, a Jewish kid who thought the rest of his friends were crazy, even seeing the clown didn't make it real for him; Bill Denbrough, who could say nothing but 'Hi-yo, Silver!' without stuttering so badly that it drove you almost as bug-shit as Richie's annoying voices did to the others; Beverly Marsh, with her bruises and her cigarettes rolled into the sleeve of her blouse; Ben Hanscom, Haystack, they called him, who had been so big he looked like a human version of Moby Dick, little asthmatic Eddie Kaspbrak and his overbearing whale of a mother; Mike Hanlon, the homeschool kid who was the last to join their little party. And Richie Tozier himself, of course, with his thick coke-bottle glasses and his trash mouth, and his face which just begged to be pounded into new and exciting shapes.

How it came back, how all of it came back... and now he stood here in his luxury bathroom, shivering as helplessly as a homeless mutt caught in a thunderstorm, shivering because the guys he had run with weren't all he remembered. There were other things, things he hadn't thought of in years, trembling just below the surface. Bloody things. A darkness. Some darkness. The house on Neibolt Street, and Bill's battle-cry of; 'I go home and all I see is that Georgie isn't there. His clothes, his toys, his stupid stuffed animals, but he isn't. So walking into this house, for me... Is easier than walking into my own.'

Did he remember? Just enough not to want to remember any more, and you could bet your fur on that. A smell of garbage, a smell of shit, and a smell of something else. Something worse than either. It was the stink of the beast, the stink of IT, down there in the darkness under Derry where the machines thundered on and on. Rich had blocked all of that out of his memory. But sometimes those things come back, oh yes indeedy, they come back, sometimes they come back.

Rich Tozier whispered to himself; "Going home now, God help me, I'm going home. Fuck it."

He felt again how easy it had been to slip through an unsuspected fissure in what he had considered a solid life. How easy it was to get over onto the dark side, to sail out of the blue and into the black. Out of the blue and into the black, yes, that was it. Where anything might be waiting. And a conviction stole over him that he would never see any of this life again,

that he was a dead man walking.

He thought with some amazement that the atmosphere has changed in the room. Richie had felt a mad, exhilarating kind of energy growing as he made his way to the bathroom. He'd tossed the magazine in the counter and took one of the little baggies from the briefcase. High quality stuff, he'd gotten his moneys worth, for sure. Pouring the powdered substance right over his face on the cover of News Weekly, he began to cut the coke into several large lines. He'd never been much good at doing so, but it would suffice tonight.

He had done cocaine on and off over the last couple of years, at parties, mostly. Always lying to himself that he didn't have a problem. He could stop whenever he wanted, the lie every addict tells themselves. Coke wasn't something you wanted just lying around your house if you were a quasi-celebrity. A little here or there, just to try it, at first. Just to give him that extra little zest for an entertaining stage presence. And the feeling he got from each snort was something like that, but not exactly. This feeling was purer, more of a mainline high. He thought he recognized the feeling from his childhood, when he had felt it every day and had come to take it merely as a matter of course. He supposed that, if he had ever thought about that deep-running energy as a kid (he could not recall that he ever had), he would have simply dismissed it as a fact of life, something that would always be there.

And maybe, Richie thought, that's the scary part. How you don't stop being a kid all at once, with a big explosive bang, like one of that fucking clown's balloons. The kid in you just leaked out, like the air out of a tire. And one day you looked in the mirror and there was a grownup looking back at you.

Richie looked at himself in the mirror and thought; there's a man who's going crazy, getting ready to commit suicide, maybe.

"Party of one... It's not over 'til you're in the emergency room, pal," Richie said to himself, this time without chuckling. There were no chucks to have here. Not tonight.

Richie Tozier pulled his glasses free from his face and dropped them on the counter beside the magazine that so gracefully featured him

on the cover. 'Rich Records' Bombs!' he read, for the first time actually took a good look at the damn thing.

"Flattery, my dear," he spoke in a perfect Orson Bean voice, "gets you nowhere."

Looking now not at the cover of his sweaty face, but the lines of coke he'd cut on top of it, a realization finally came to him; this amount of cocaine could be lethal, he thought. No, it would be. He knew that. Hell, he welcomed it, he begged for death. Anything but to go back to that place and face the true terrors of his childhood. Pink Floyd's 'Comfortably Numb' was now playing on his stereo and it all the company he needed on this journey, this last hurrah, right Steve?

Looking down at where his money had gone, on those thickly cut lines of 'bolivian marching powder,' Rich knew he would probably drop dead before he even got to the last one. He hoped he would, anyway, and he'd go out in a wave of sheer bliss before then.

He started at the top line. "Ah, 'old habits never die, they just hibernate.' Right, Rip?"

Putting the little black pipe to his nose, Rich knelt down and in his weather man voice, announced; "And the forecast is... cloudy in the mountains, sunny in the valleys, and snow flurries up your nose." Rich snorted the first line like it was the last thing he was ever going to do and was making damn sure it counted for something. If he was so lucky, it would be. The gesture felt so perfectly and scarily familiar to him. A flash of memories, not of the Derry days, but of all the partying he'd done in his time happened before his eyes. Of which, there had been plenty. With the amount of livin', (L-I-V-I-N') he had done in the last decade, he was shocked to still be standing.

Rich went to take another snort, bending downward as he suddenly felt his stomach churn and that sick burning of acid reflux hitting the back of his throat. Heaving, he pushed himself away from the counter and went into a coughing fit. The kind of fit he used to have when he was a smoker, the only form of socially acceptable suicide and a habit he'd picked up in his twenties that stuck with him until he quit four years ago.

"Come on, Tozier," he told himself. "Get a grip, man. This is the good stuff, the good shit. Just like the good ol' fucked up days." He tried again, looking down at what remained and having to stop himself once more. Shit, he'd made seven of them. Seven lines, seven losers. What the fuck do you know about this. One down, six to go. He took a deep breath and exhaled, momentarily wishing he had been breathing cigarette smoke into his lungs. Game time. Richie moved back to the counter, this was it. Nothing but him and Floyd and those lines.

*Hello (hello, hello...)
Is there anybody in there?
Just nod if you can hear me
Is there anyone at home?*

*Come on (come on) now..
I hear you're feeling... down
Well I can ease your pain
Get you, on your feet again*

*Relax (relax, relax...)
I'll need some information, first
Just the basic facts...
Can you show me where it hurts?*

"Do it," Richie told himself over the music. "Just... fucking.." His eyes were already blood-shot red and beginning to tear, but it wasn't from the drugs. This was the moment, make or break, live or die. He leaned back down and replaced the pipe to his nostril. Rich snorted another line. The toxins swam up his nose, but that's all he felt anymore. No high, no relief, nothing. He was numb. This time as he pulled away, he saw his own eyes on the magazine beneath him.

"I can't," he said with a voice that was broken, unlike any of the voices he had done before. This was his real voice. Looking down at himself on the magazine that was progressively getting more blurry the further away he pulled, both from his poor vision and the tears continuing to form. "I can't do this, I can't .." Richie sobbed pitifully. Finally, he looked at his reflection in the mirror beside him.

"You.." Richie said to himself, looking at the remnants of the drug

scattered all over his face. He didn't recognize himself anymore. He wasn't even looking at a real person. This was just another one of his characters. "You.. FUCKING NOBODY!" Richie screamed and thrust his fist into the mirror, shattering it. "YOU WORTHLESS.. FUCKING.. NOTHING! IT'S ALL FAKE! FUCKING FAKE! EVERYTHING IS GODDAMN FUCKING FAKE!"

He began thrashing about the room, grabbing the magazine that rightly bashed him for his poor performance and ripping it in half, creating a cloud of what once was ten grand worth of substance. "NOTHING! NOBODY! FUCKING LOSER!" It didn't stop, his heart was racing, Richie knocked all his worthless awards off the shelf, all those stupid framed pictures from the walls. It all came crashing down, and along with it, Richie's sanity.

Finally he came to a stop. Throwing himself against the wall, Richie sobbed not just in pain, but in complete anguish. He slid all the way to the floor and wrapped his arms firmly around his knees, this was the closest thing to a hug he'd felt in years. And through his tears, Richie actually began laughing. Rather hysterically, too. Morbidly so, and at the irony of it all. He was nothing, nobody, as fake as all his voices. And yet, through it all, the one truth Richie Tozier finally was able to come to the conclusion of was that he was simply didn't have it in him kill himself.

No O.D.
No death.
Not tonight.

No ... *That* was waiting for him, back in Derry.

*... There is no pain you are receding,
A distant ship smoke on the horizon.
You are only coming through in waves.
Your lips move..
but I can't hear what you're saying...*

*When I was a child, I had a fever,
My hands felt just like two balloons...
Now I've got that feeling once again
I can't explain you would not understand*

This is not how I am...

I ... Have become... Comfortably numb...

Richie leaned over and began to violently vomit again, making a mess all over himself and adding to the floor, already covered in the shards of his belongings. He slid across the slick tiles to the toilet on his knees like some weird break-dancer, gripped the edges, and vomited everything he had left in his guts.

"Alright," Richie spat through a strained voice, pushing himself up with hands that trembled. In fact, his whole body was shaking at that moment.

"Okay, I get the point. No more of this shit. I got the fuckin' memo..."

He made his way back to the bathroom and grabbed a towel, wiping the bile off his face. He reached down and snagged his glasses off the counter. Somehow, through his rampage, they had been the only things left untouched. Go figure, it's as if they were mocking him. He replaced them to his face and looked at himself again in what remained of the mirror. The Animals 'It's my life' now filled the house as he wiped what was left of the tears off his cheeks.

"Alright then." Richie said to himself. "Let's go back to Derry, you fucking loser."